



**Longstone Community Council  
Secretary's Report for 2024-25**

## **Membership**

At the most recent Community Council elections, held in Feb 2025 the following eight local residents were elected as members of LCC. Des Loughney, Alan Gordon, Ray Donnelly, Will Sturgeon, Euan Robertson, Anastasia Muri, Mary Hill and John Allan. At the inaugural meeting of LCC, Sonia Nemec was co-opted as a member bringing our membership to nine, with Alan Gordon appointed as Secretary, Ray Donnelly as Treasurer, Will Sturgeon as Engagement & Diversity Officer, Des Loughney as Chair, and Mary Hill as Vice-chair.

## **Meetings**

Meetings have been held in the Session Room of Slateford/Longstone Church apart from the December meeting, held at The Kingsknowe. Including the 2024 AGM & 2025 inaugural meeting, we held 9 meetings during the year. Apart from an AGM, the minimum number of meetings required is 6. Grateful to the support of the church team & The Kingsknowe for facilitating our public meetings this year. It's been pleasing to see attendance at our meetings rising and we've had some great questions from residents, many of which local Councillors present were able to take on and resolve.

## **Police**

Despite the pressure on police resources, the community police team have attended our meetings when able, as well as hosting ward forums which members from different community councils can attend to discuss or raise matters. The SW police team also issue a quarterly newsletter covering activities and initiatives in the locality. The community team engage well with us via email when we raise concerns with them.

## **CEC Councillors / MSP / MP**

We've enjoyed the support of our local councillors who attend meetings when able and who often pursue matters on our behalf with council officers, speak on matters at CEC committee meetings, backing the community council's deputations. We are grateful for their support and the traction they have brought to local matters.

We were extremely saddened by the sudden death of much liked Labour Councillor Val Walker after our inaugural meeting in April 2025. Val was a regular attendee at our meetings and we will miss her passion for community and people greatly. Our thoughts very much with her family, colleagues and friends. A by-election will now take place in June 2025 in the Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart ward as a result.

We welcomed MP Scott Arthur as our newly elected MP in July 2024 following the UK General Election. It's been good to meet his office staff and have his support for establishing a new Junior Parkrun in Hailes Quarry Park.

We wish Gordon MacDonald well following his decision to step down as MSP at the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2026 and thanks him for his support over the years.



## 2024 AGM

It was held on 10/06/24, at which the following were appointed: Des Loughney as Chair, John Allan as Vice-chair, Alan Gordon as Secretary, Ray Donnelly as Treasurer, and Will Sturgeon as Engagement Officer. As already noted in the membership commentary, Community Council elections were held in Feb 25 after which the following were appointed: Des Loughney as Chair, Mary Hill as Vice-chair, Ray Donnelly as Treasurer, Alan Gordon as Secretary, and Will Sturgeon as Engagement & Diversity Officer.

## Planning & Development

**22/02233/FUL** - The former Booker site (22 Inglis Green Road) was granted planning permission on 13/06/2024 for a mixed-use residential and commercial development with associated landscape, parking, and infrastructure. As part of the Section 75 agreement the developer has agreed to contribute £168,000 toward a new bridge crossing (Longstone Link) towards New Mart Road from the development. Construction of the development has yet to commence.

**25/00782/FUL** - Following the proposed development of student flats in Inglis Green Gate which was rejected by planning officers due to the impact on trees on the site, the subsequent appeal was also refused permission on 11/09/2024. Another application was made on 17/02/2025 which was also refused permission on 28/05/2025, again due to the impact on the trees, their amenity value, and also the complete lack of amenity within the development, placing students at risk of social isolation.

**25/00249/FUL** - A renewed application was made on 17/01/2025 for the proposed development on the site of the former Longstone Inn for 21 flats and a commercial unit. The site has fallen into a dreadful state of disrepair, is unsecure and a prime vandalism target. Opinions were mixed on the 'stage 1' development proposal but most accepted this site is an eyesore now and if the development can be improved visually then would be an improvement. We await the planning decision.

**24/01728/FULSTL** - Slateford House were granted the 'change of use' from 'commercial office' to 'serviced apartments' on 29/01/2025. LCC remain concerned about the whereabouts and protection of David Chalmers memorial plaque, but cannot get a response from the owner. We have also requested the external clock is fixed so the correct time shows on it's different faces.

**18/04268/FUL** - Despite the owner of 'The Kingsknowe' having permission to demolish it and redevelop the site for housing, nothing has changed and we're pleased to see the pub continuing to function. Permission expires during August 2025.

**19/03380/FUL** - The redevelopment of the Westside Motors site in Slateford (35 Lanark Road) as purpose built student accommodation has shown no further progress, other than its demolition which counted as 'initiation of development'.

**24/03822/FUL** - A revised application for a development of 11x flatted dwellings on site of former Lanark Road childrens' nursery, with associated works was granted permission on 19/11/2024.



## Environment

**Safer School Streets** – A refreshed school travel plan was released but the Heads of both schools had not been made aware and felt engagement from CEC had been poor. We never managed to get the Council Officer to attend a meeting and an invitation to work with LCC on road safety improvements was rebuffed. Parents at Longstone (PALs) have also raised concerns about the lack of any progress or delivery of any measures.

**Hailes Quarry Park** - Lighting has been delivered which includes solar spot lights inset into paths and tall solar powered downlighting on the route from Longstone Street through the park to bus services on Murrayburn Road. This has been a very welcome addition with a big impact for pedestrians.

**Burnside Path Sinkhole** – Following much discussion and deputations at the Transport & Environment Committee to urge action, it was established that CEC are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the flood defence wall protecting that section of the path.

**Lanark Road Pedestrian Crossing** is currently expected to be installed between 08/09/2025 & 07/12/2025. Approx. outside 293 and 298 Lanark Road, at junction with Kingsknowe Park.

**Scottish Water Sewer Upgrade** - works were finally completed after a years worth of disruption to traffic. The flood defence works in Redhall School were also completed which was a relief to the residents affected by noise and site traffic.

**West ETROs** – The experimental traffic road orders covering Lanark Rd, Longstone Rd and Inglis Green Road were re-advertised during the year with the period for consultation on the schemes now closed. The outcome is expected to be decided at a subcommittee of the Transport and Environment Committee in the coming months.

**Graffiti** - LCC had a couple of graffiti successes. Graffiti on the gable end of the tenement on Longstone St, next to Hailes Quarry Park entrance was painted over by CEC. Following an uptick in 'tagging' and a particularly bad spree on Inglis Green Road, LCC member Will Sturgeon was able to remove much of it while still fresh.

**Potholes** – LCC reported about 75 bad potholes locally, both in the road, pavement, and cycle lanes. Approx. 50 were filled within a few days of reporting which was encouraging and others have been filled as the year has progressed. We also met with the CEC Roads team and local Councillors Ross McKenzie & Denis Dixon and walked around the worst affected roads in our area. We learned a lot in the process and hope to see some local roads prioritised for resurfacing in the coming years. Quite a lot of competition alas.



## **Community Projects / Events**

### **Kingsknowe Court / Place and Longstone Street Public Realm Improvements**

We met with CEC Housing officers, Cllrs Ross McKenzie & Denis Dixon, and local residents to walk around the area to discuss the state the public realm and housing revenue account land had been left in following works on the sheltered housing. Improvements were then made by the contractors. Additional issues were pointed out with grass cutting, weed growth on kerblines, the state of paths and pavements, parking bays, bin hubs, street lighting and accessibility issues. It was good to see short term improvements being made to path edges with contractors working through the area in June 25 and grass and shrubbery being dealt with behind the housing on Longstone Street. The kerbs will be tackled next by contractors who will clear them of weeds.

Longer term a brief is being prepared which Atkins will be engaged to consult on. This will be multi-million pound improvements to paths, entrances to housing blocks, pavement, roads, tree planting, bin compounds. This will come out for consultation to affected local residents.

### **Remembrance Service at War Memorial**

We joined the remembrance ceremony on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November, led by Chaplain to the Forces, Rev. Bob Henderson. Thanks to LCC member Ray Donnelly for laying our wreath, alongside local councillors, and veterans. on Saturday 09<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Community Parks (Redhall / Dovecot / Hailes Quarry) - Tree/Bulb Planting**

In November 24 LCC teamed up with Friends of Redhall Park to plant spring bulbs up near the war memorial which looked great this spring. LCC member Euan Robertson arranged for packs of trees to be delivered from the Woodland Trust which were planted up near the war memorial. Support of the CEC Parks team much appreciated.

LCC also worked with the Parks officers and local residents to plant around 180 saplings as well as some standard trees in Dovecot Park. Again, thanks to member Euan Robertson for ordering the trees.

### **Junior Parkrun - Hailes Quarry Park**

LCC are working with SW20 to instigate a 'Junior Park Run' every Sunday around Hailes Quarry Park. We have six run directors who have been undergoing child safeguarding training and Disclosure Scotland background checks. Not that these have come through, we are moving towards obtaining a start date from Parkrun and will hold a warm up run with volunteer run marshals prior to the official launch. MP Scott Arthur's office have been very supportive and facilitated a meeting to drive matters forward. Grateful to the CEC Community Grant Scheme who provided a £4800 grant to establish the event.



## Wayfinding Plinth Upgrade and Planting

Partnering with Friends of Redhall Park, LCC applied for a small CEC Community Grant to renovate the concrete wayfinding plinth at the top of the path down to Redhall Park from the Union Canal, and create a new wildflower area with additional planting to welcome people to Longstone. Our thanks to LCC member Ray Donnelly for all his work cleaning and painting the plinth as well as weeding and planting the new area. Also, thanks to local resident Julian who volunteered his time to fabricate and install a wooden bench top on the plinth and to local resident Grant who lent us his tools. It's been a great success.

## Local History Project

Grateful to LCC member Mary Hill who has been leading on pulling together a local history project to capture memories from our long term local residents, many of who have great stories to tell. Mary has been discussing how to proceed with the Living Memory Association and we hope to get started on this in the coming months.

## Lord Provost Event

Ray Donnelly and Alan Gordon attended the Lord Provost's event at the City Chambers to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Community Councils being established. Alan made a small speech about the positive things LCC have been doing over the year and the difference it makes locally.

## Firework Control Zone

Following feedback from local residents it was decided that LCC should apply for a firework exclusion zone this year. Residents are fed up with the impacts on pets and wildlife, the mis-use of them in public spaces, impacts on neurodivergent family members, and the ever increasing number of nights this occurs over. Outcome to be confirmed.

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## AG June 2025

